

## ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides compositions and methods for prevention and prophylaxis of neurological diseases accompanied by neuronal death. The invention includes synthesis of 5-benzylamino salicylic acid (BAS) and its derivatives. BAS and its derivatives protect cortical neurons from toxic insults by N-methyl-D-aspartate,  $Zn^{2+}$ , and reactive oxygen species. Thus, the present invention provides compositions and methods for treating stroke, traumatic brain and spinal cord injury, epilepsy, and neurodegenerative diseases that are accompanied by severe neuronal loss via excitotoxicity,  $Zn^{2+}$  neurotoxicity, and free radical neurotoxicity.

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